

# Army Learning Model 2015: Practical Implications for Instructors

The goal of Army Learning Model 2015 is to achieve a Continuous Adaptive Learning Model that instills 21<sup>st</sup> Century Soldier competencies through a learner-centric environment, supported by an adaptive development and delivery infrastructure that enables career-long learning and sustained adaptation. This Model is defined by two themes:

Theme #1: improving the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of face-to-face learning experiences through outcome-oriented instructional strategies that foster thinking, initiative, and provide operationally relevant context.

Theme #2: extending learning beyond the schoolhouse in a career long continuum of learning through the significantly expanded use of network technologies.

Instructors can support a Continuous Adaptive Learning Model by:

## **Delivering instruction that purposefully develops “Learning Outcomes” (Para. 3-3c)**

- 1) Outcome = Tasks + Qualities + Context (3-4) – Outcomes focus on developing: 1) the specific task skills (Tasks) required for job success, 2) the attributes, characteristics and values (Qualities) the Army requires of its Soldiers, and 3) connections between the skills and knowledge gained in class with the job Soldiers will be required to perform in future combat situations (Context).
- 2) Master Course Intent (3-5b(3)) – the instructor must understand the “intent” of the course (the core fundamental competencies to be developed) if they are to successfully prepare their students. If the instructor does not have this solid foundation they will be unable to facilitate meaningful discussion on those topics much less answer student questions.
- 3) Provide feedback/ideas to Leadership and Training Developers – the instructor must be able to provide feedback to their leadership and to training developers regarding the perceived success of the course content. Instructors have the best vantage point regarding how well the course material is designed and sequenced. They should be encouraged to submit suggestions for course improvement through the appropriate channels.

## **Creating a collaborative, rigorous and learner-centric environment (3-5a)**

- 1) Facilitate Discussion (3-5a) – the instructor must be able to lead meaningful discussions that allow students to explore the foundation and core principles of the course content. This means being able engage students through thought-provoking questions not just lecture. This kind of instruction allows students to collaborate and learn from each other’s perspective. The instructor serves more as a “guide on the side” rather than “sage on the stage.”
- 2) Problem-Centered Instruction (3-5a) – the instructor must be able to present challenging scenario-based exercises to the students that require critical thinking, prioritization and decision making. These problems should provide context for future situations that the students may encounter, thus showing a connection between what they learn in the class and what they will do on the job.
- 3) Prior Knowledge and Experience (3-5a) – the instructor must be able to use the student’s current level of knowledge and experience to alter the breadth, depth or method used to cover course content.

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## **Providing quality, consistent counseling and mentoring to students (3-7b & d)**

- 1) In-Course Counseling (3-7d, 3-5f) – the instructor must be able to provide students an *objective* assessment of their performance as well as a *subjective* viewpoint that can provide insight and motivation toward improvement. Quality counseling not only includes what a student “did wrong” but also provides ways to improve performance. Instructors must also be able to facilitate 360° assessments which provide feedback from not only the instructor but the student’s peers as well. It is a valuable source of feedback on qualities and characteristics not easily measured through objective assessments.
- 2) Career Advice (3-5g) – although the instructors are not “career counselors” they should be able to assist students in establishing learning goals that lead to a successful career. Tools such as the Army Career Tracker (ACT) will allow students manage lifelong learning objectives. Instructors can learn more about their students by reviewing their ACT so that they can assist in goal setting as well as encourage personal responsibility and initiative.

## **Pursuing professional development to further basic skills and knowledge (3-7d)**

- 1) Lifelong Learning (2-3e) – the instructor must constantly seek ways to increase knowledge and improve skills. Modeling “lifelong learning” not only continually develops the instructor’s capabilities but it is also a great way to motivate students to do the same.
- 2) Digital Literacy (2-3e) – the instructor must understand how to use basic technology if they are to be successful in a Blended Learning environment. Professional development must focus on technical knowledge and skills if instructors are to take full advantage of the resources at their disposal. These skills range from using basic classroom technology (i.e. projector remote controls) to advanced and emerging technology (i.e. Blackboard, Augmented Reality).